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TAGS: [PINS](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [PINR](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: PM'S OFFICE TAKES CHARGE OF INVESTIGATION INTO ASSASSINATION
OF BABIL PC CANDIDATE: SUNNI EXTREMISTS ARE PRIME SUSPECTS

REF: A) 09HILLAH3; B) 09HILLAH4

CLASSIFIED BY: Kenneth Hillas, Team Leader, Babil PRT, Dept of
State.
REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

[¶1.](#) (C) On January 20 a Baghdad investigative team arrived in Babil to take the lead in the investigation into the assassination of Haytem Al-Husseiny, Da'wa's number two candidate for election to the PC. The Baghdad team is led by officials from the PM's office -- apparently the CTB -- but also includes MOD and MOI officials too, according to a senior ISF office and a senior Da'wa official.

[¶2.](#) (C) The Mahawil Police Chief was relieved of his command on 21 January. Although he himself has not been accused of a role in the assassination, three officers under his command in the Jabella sub-district are suspected of having played a role in the assassination and remain in detention (reftels). Meanwhile, Da'wa Deputy Chairman Dr. Neama Jassim clarified a statement carried by the Iraqi media in which he was quoted as saying that the terrorists who killed Al-Husseiny had ties to the Iraqi security forces. Dr. Jassim told the PRT that the only ISF/terrorist ties that are suspected involve the three Jabella policemen.

[¶3.](#) (C) The SWAT police commander believes that the wide-scale round up of largely Sunni citizens following the 16 January killing has been heavy handed and has damaged the confidence of the Sunni community in the ISF. MG Abdul Ameer's 19 January private assertion that the focus of the investigation was three known Sunni civilian extremists (Ref B), two of whom he claimed had been detained, was denied on 21 January by PDoP BG Fadhil Raddad. In the view of SWAT Commander Abbas, the ISF does not have credible leads on the perpetrators. He said both the Army and Police were finding convenient targets at which to point an accusatory finger, and that the Sunni activists mentioned earlier by Abdul Ameer had severed their ties to terrorists in [¶2007](#). He did not exclude the possibility, however, that Sunni grievances against Al-Husseiny, who reportedly led Shia reprisal attacks on Sunnis in 2006/07, may have motivated some local citizens to kill him. In any event, the attack was well planned and coordinated.

[¶4.](#) (C) Dawa officials in Babil continue to express confidence in the conduct of the investigation, which is not surprising now that it is being run by a secret unit subordinate to the PM's office.

HILLAS